RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Draft Environmental Assessment

Millerton Lake South Kiosk Replacement

EA-07-55

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid Pacific Region
South Central California Area Office
Fresno, California

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations and Definition of Terms

af	acre-feet (the volume of water one foot deep and an acre in area)
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CDPR	California Department of Parks and Recreation
CTS	California Tiger Salamander
CVP	Central Valley Project
CVPIA	Central Valley Project Improvement Act
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EA	Environmental Assessment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FWCA	Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
ITA	Indian Trust Asset
MLSRA	Millerton Lake State Recreation Area
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer

Section 1 Purpose and Need for Action

1.1 Background

Millerton Lake is located in the southern portion of California's Central Valley in Fresno and Madera Counties in the upper San Joaquin Watershed. Millerton Lake and the majority of adjacent lands comprising the Millerton Lake State Recreation Area (MLSRA) are owned by the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Some land within MLSRA is owned by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG.) CDPR manages the entire MLSRA through agreements with Reclamation and CDFG for recreation purposes.

Millerton Lake is a reservoir formed by Friant Dam as part of the Central Valley Project (CVP), a federally funded project established in the 1930s that extends from Shasta Dam in northern California to the Kern River in the south. Completed in 1942, Friant Dam was constructed and has been managed by Reclamation. Friant Dam regulates the normal flow of the San Joaquin River and stores flood waters for irrigation and M&I diversion into the Friant-Kern and Madera Canals and for releases to water rights holders on the river below the dam. Millerton Lake has a storage capacity of 520,500 acre-feet (af) and a surface area of 4,900 acres.

On November 1, 1957, Reclamation entered into a 50-year lease with the State of California through its State Park Commission for the purpose of developing, administering, and maintaining the public lands around Millerton Lake as part of the State Park System. The agreement stipulated that the occupancy, control, and administration of the park were subject to use by Reclamation and other CVP purposes pursuant to the federal reclamation laws. This agreement allows for recreation that is consistent with the primary purpose of the project for water supply. All recreation uses and improvements at the lake must be consistent with the original purpose of the Reclamation project and must not interfere with reservoir operations, which are focused on providing a reliable annual yield of high-quality water primarily for agricultural use.

1.2 Purpose and Need

Reclamation proposes to approve of the removal of the two South Shore Entry Kiosks by CDPR and the replacement of the two kiosks 100 feet farter into the park. The project is needed because ingress into MLSRA of boating traffic has been found to back up on Friant Road leading to unsafe driving conditions. The project would allow CDPR to replace facilities that are past their useful life (more than 40 years old) and deteriorating to the point they may become hazardous; and to expand the road to accommodate the larger vehicles in use today and provide a safer and more efficient area for admitting users to the boat launch area.

1.3 Scope

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to examine the impacts on environmental resources as a result alterations to the entrance kiosks at MLSRA. The current kiosks would be moved 100 feet into the park and the existing deteriorating structures would be replaced. The analysis focuses on the construction foot print which is situated in critical habitat for California Tiger Salamander (CTS.)

1.4 Potential Issues

- Water Resources
- Biological Resources
- Recreation Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Indian Trust Assets
- Traffic
- Socioeconomic Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Cumulative Impacts

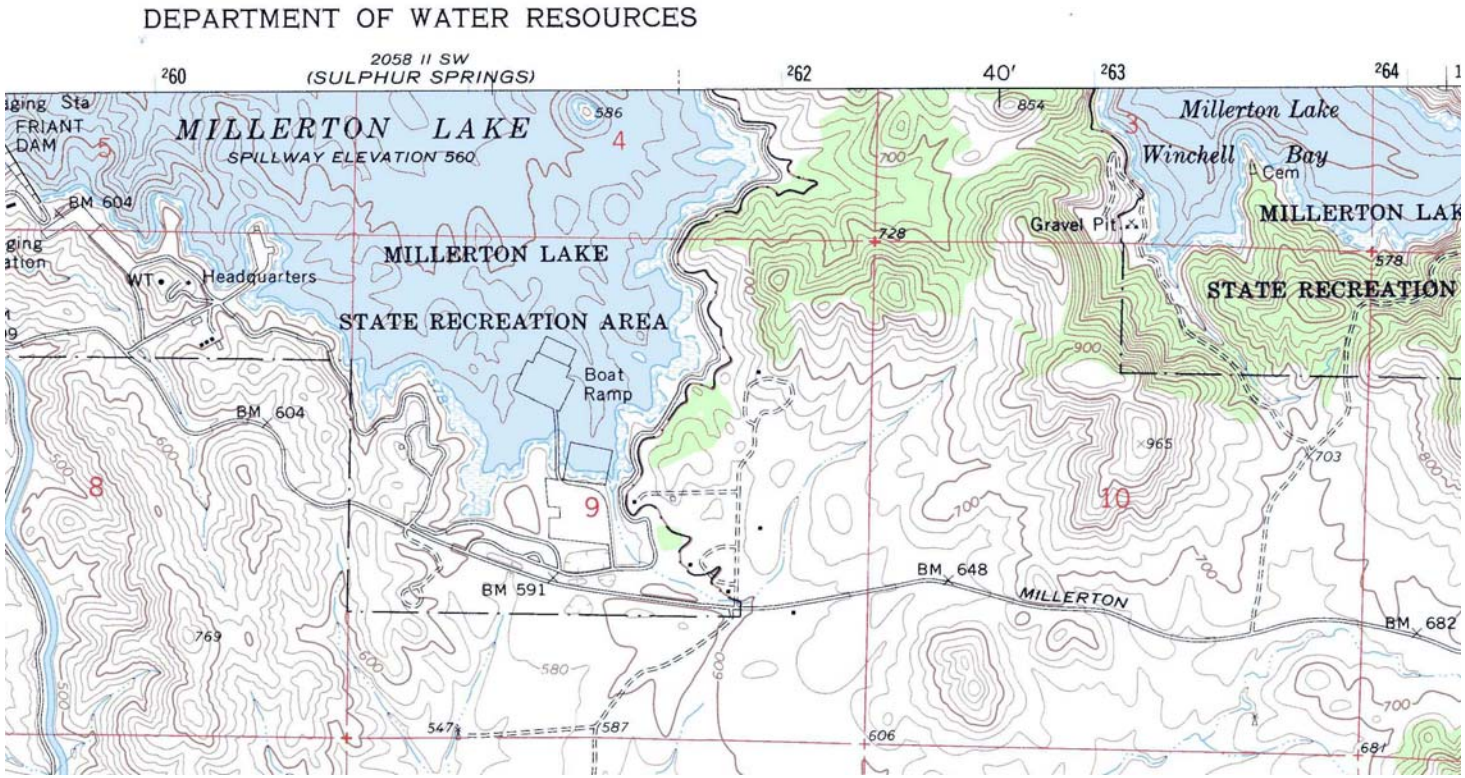

Figure 1-1 Topo Map Showing Millerton Road and Millerton Lake State Recreation Area South Entrance

Section 2 Alternatives Including Proposed Action

2.1 Alternative A – No Action

Under the No Action alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the entrance kiosks at MLSRA. Portions of the kiosk would be removed as they were determined not to be safe such as the metal canopy shielding drivers from the elements. Incoming traffic into MLSRA would continue to back up onto Friant Road causing unsafe traffic conditions.

2.2 Alternative B - Proposed Action

Reclamation would approve the replacement of the South Shore Entrance Kiosks (Kiosk). Replacement would consist of two new entrance kiosks, a new canopy, new landscaping, relocation of the septic tank and leach lines and new hardscaping which includes sidewalks and pavement. All construction work would be contracted out. The Department of Boating and Waterways would be overseeing and occasionally inspecting the construction for progress and suitability. Most of the project would be a "remove and replace" type project with the exception of some of the hardscaping which would be new construction.

Two new kiosks would be constructed at the site. The main kiosk would contain a bathroom inside for use by park staff. The restroom in the new kiosk would contain a low flow toilet (1.5 gallons per flush) and a sink for hand washing. The maximum discharge volume to the septic tank would be 28 gallons per day.

The entrance to the park would be widened to provide room for traffic. New pavement markings would be placed and a canopy shade covering both kiosks and the entryway into the park would also be put in place. The recommended shade covering would cover both the road and the two kiosks. During construction all equipment (steamrolls, backhoes, etc.) would remain on the construction site.

Concrete Pads and Islands

With the exception of the west end of the concrete pad (west of existing flag pole/planter/curb) in which the existing kiosk is situated, all existing concrete pads as well as kiosks at the current entrance would be removed and disposed of off site. The flag pole, iron ranger and electronic station would be removed and stored on site and reinstalled at the new kiosk building. Four new islands would be constructed at about 100 feet east of the existing pads with concrete curbs with landscaping in the center. Parts of the islands would be padded with 4 inch concrete slabs. Existing A/C paving would be saw cut where necessary for new concrete curb and foundation, repair and resurface as required.

Access Road and Curbs

The road at the new entrance would be graded and widened to be 90 feet. Parts of existing curbs would be removed (and disposed of off site) in order to make way for the widened road and a new concrete curb would be constructed around the widened road linking with the existing curbs. Curbs to be removed are shown as dashed lines on sheet C-1 of the plans. Road widening would require removal of a portion of the hill beside the current road. The excavation cut would be hydro-seeded.

North of the entrance, the existing curb and pavement on the access road coming out of the parking area would be removed. The pavement area would be extended so that the parking exit would be east of the entrance kiosk. The new exit to the parking area would be 280 feet east of the entrance (90 feet east of the current exit). This pavement area would also be widened to provide staff and temporary parking as well as camper/trailer temporary parking. A concrete curb would be constructed surrounding the pavement area, linking with the existing curbs. The enclosed area between the main entrance/exit road and the staff/temporary parking would be graded as required for concrete walkways and new landscaping. All landscape areas are to be filled with 4 inch shredded bark.

Kiosks

The main kiosk would be constructed about 100 feet from the existing kiosk on the north-most island. Its dimensions would be 32 feet by 12 feet-8 inches. The small kiosk would be located 12 feet 2 inches south of the main kiosk on the middle island. The dimensions for the small kiosk would be 8 feet by 14 feet.

Grading

Sites where pavement is to be laid would be graded to be level with existing pavement. Along the south of the widened entrance road there would be a swale 6 feet to 12 feet wide and 2 feet deep. The area immediately south of the swale would be graded to be less steep. Excess material would be disposed of off site. All existing trees would remain and be protected during construction. Total temporarily disturbed area for the repavement and kiosk replacement is 10,500 square feet however the permanent foot print of the final construction area would have 1,400 square feet less than the existing footprint.

Sewage System Replacement

The existing septic system consists of a 750-gallon tank, distribution box and leach line. The leach field is currently located in a drainage area that collects and holds water during the rainy season. This puts the leach field under water during wet periods possibly compromising water quality and animal habitat.

The project will relocate the septic system to a more suitable location. The new project area is north of the park road and parking area. Project equipment would be a rubber tired tractor with backhoe (580 Case or equivalent.) and enter and leave the area via the existing driveway and parking area, to minimize impacts to native vegetation and soil. Excavation of the septic system would include excavation for one 1500 gallon septic tank: 8 feet deep, 8 feet wide and 12 feet long. The pipe connecting the kiosk to the septic tank is no more than ten feet with only a foot or two being off of the proposed paved area. This pipe is a 4 inch line and would require a trench one foot wide and two feet deep to be constructed with a backhoe. The pipe connecting the septic tank to the leach field would require excavation of a trench 3 feet deep, 1 foot wide and 87 feet long. Leach field excavation would require two trenches, 3 feet deep, 2 wide and 75 feet long. Total temporarily disturbed area for the septage system replacement would be 485 square feet.

The existing system would be decommissioned. The manhole over the septic tank would be broken out. The septic tank would be pumped and cleaned and then filled with native lake sand. Distribution box top would also be broken out and this box would be filled with native lake sand. The four inch pipes and leach lines would be left in place. There would be no ground disturbance to decommission the existing septic system.

The project would be reviewed and completed though the Fresno County Building Department permitting process. The work would be performed by state park personnel. The project can be completed in seven work days and would be performed during the period of least impact to plants, animals and the public.

All overburden, spoils and construction debris would be disposed off site.

Timeframe

The contractor would have 180 calendar days from the "Notice to Proceed" date to complete the project. Construction can go longer in the case of unforeseen circumstances.

Staging Area

The staging area would be on one of the parking lots near the construction site. It would be on hardscape. The exact location of parking lot that would be used would be coordinated between the contractor and CDPR.

Section 3 Affected Environment & Environmental Consequences

3.1 Water Resources

3.1.1 Affected Environment

Millerton Lake is operated by Reclamation to store and divert water to the Madera and Friant-Kern Canals for irrigation and municipal and industrial water supplies in the eastern portion of the San Joaquin Valley and for flood protection. Several reservoirs in the upper portion of the San Joaquin River watershed, including Edison, Florence, Huntington, Mammoth Pool, and Shaver Lake, are owned by Southern California Edison and Pacific Gas & Electric Company and are primarily used for hydroelectric power generation. The operation of these reservoirs affects the inflow to Millerton Lake. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over the flood control operations and reserves up to 390,000 acre-feet per year for flood control storage. Each year Millerton Lake is operated to deliver all or most of the conservation storage to irrigation contractors. The lake is refilled in the winter and spring from rain and snowmelt.

The potable water supply in the south shore area is purchased from Fresno County Waterworks District #18 (FCWW # 18), which also serves the Friant community and draws water from Millerton Lake. (Griggs 2002) The treated potable water from FCWW #18 is pumped to water storage tanks located on a hill near the ranger station. The water is then distributed to the south shore area (including the kiosks.) The water supply is made available under contracts with Reclamation and FCWW#18. The agreement with Reclamation limits water withdrawal from the lake to 21 af per year (Fernandez 2002) this includes water used on the north shore and water purchased from FCWW#18 on the south shore, since this water is also pumped from the lake.

3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Water use at the kiosks would be approximately 40 gallons per day and the water made available from FCWW#18 would remain the same.

The current location of the septic tank and leach lines is within a swale that is occasionally inundated. Due to water table contact with the effluent, there is a small potential for water contamination and reduced water quality due to the existing placement.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Water use at the kiosks would decrease somewhat to 27 gallons per day due to the installation of low flow toilets. This decrease in use at the kiosks would not appreciably change the water use for MLSRA as a whole since this usage is a small percentage of the overall water use.

The Proposed Action includes the movement of the septic tank and leach fields. The current location of the septic tank and leach lines is within a swale that is occasionally inundated. Due to water table contact with the effluent, there is a small potential for water contamination due to the existing placement. Relocation of the leach field would have a minute positive impact on water quality in the immediate area. Due to lack of transmissivity of the groundwater in the area the positive impacts would be very localized and minor. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service notes that all of the soils of MLSRA have severe constraints for normal septic systems. (State Parks 1979) Most development constraints based on soils in MLSRA are due to slope porosity, rockiness of the area or depth of bedrock. CDPR staff have over designed the leach lines for the likely wastewater effluent evolved from the one restroom and would do a percolation test to determine the depth and length of the leach lines. Fresno County inspectors would permit the leach line's design based on the percolation test to ensure their public safety and effectiveness. No impacts to water quality would occur due to the relocation of the septic tank and leach lines.

No additional water supplies would be diverted from rivers. Overall water supply quantities would not change. Water would support existing kiosk use as has been done in the past. There is no impact to water resources from the Proposed Action.

3.2 Biological Resources

3.2.1 Affected Environment

The action area for the Proposed Action lies within a nonnative grassland community. This area has been heavily disturbed by the development of the existing road and kiosks as well as foot traffic around the site. The nonnative grassland community is dominated by approximately 90 to 100 percent nonnative annual grasses and includes nonnative and native herbs. Dominant plants observed in this community during fall and winter were common nonnative grasses: ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), and zorro grass (*Vulpia myuros*). Some common associated native hers were broad-leaf filaree (*Erodium botrys*) and fiddleneck (*Amsinckia sp*.). Heermann tarweed (*Holocappha heermannii*) and vinegar week (*Trichostema lanceolatum*), two fall flowering native herbs, were also prevalent during field surveys. Occasionally a tree such as a blue oak or gray pine or shrubs such as buck brush occur in this community.

Almost all of the action area for the project is located within critical habitat for the California Tiger Salamander (CTS). Ground squirrel burrows are evident throughout the area.

Potential listed species in the area were determined by accessing the FWS's database. The following list was obtained on July 23, 2007, by accessing the FWS database: http://www.fws.gov/pacific/sacramento/es/spp_lists/auto_list.cfm. The list is for the Friant Quad (FWS, 2007). The list was last updated June 9, 2007.

TABLE 1: FEDERAL STATUS SPECIES ON FRIANT QUAD LISTS FOR MILLERTON KIOSK PROJECT

Common Name	***Species Name***	***Fed Status***	***ESA***	***Summary basis for ESA determination***
Bald eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard	*Gambilia sila*	E	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
Conservancy fairy shrimp	*Branchinecta conservatio*	E	NE	Vernal pools are not found in the project area
California tiger salamander, Central DPS	*Ambystoma californiense*	T	NE	Reclamation would consult with the FWS on potential effects
California tiger salamander – Critical Habitat		CH	NE	10,945 sq ft of CTS critical habitat would be temporarily disturbed during the construction phase. The final net result after construction would be an additional 15,000 sq ft of permanently disturbed ground covering activities within critical habitat.
California red-legged frog	*Rana aurora draytonii*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
California red-legged frog critical habitat				
Central Valley steelhead	*Oncorhynchus mykiss*	T	NE	No effect on natural stream systems
Delta smelt	*Hypomesus transpacificus*	T	NE	No downstream effects from action
Fresno kangaroo rat	*Dipodomys nitratoides exilis*	E	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of affect; species not trapped since 1992 but may still occur on Alkali Sink.
Giant garter snake	*Thamnophis gigas*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
Hartweg's golden sunburst	Pseudobahia bahiifolia	E	NE	No individuals in area of effect
Fleshy Owl's Clover	*Castilleja campestris spp. Succulenta*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect

Fleshy Owl's Clover- Critical Habitat		CH	NE	
San Joaquin kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis mutica*	E	NE	No kit fox in project area
San Joaquin Valley Orcutt Grass	*Orcuttia inaequalis*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
San Joaquin Valley Orcutt Grass critical habitat		CH	NE	
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle	*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*	T	NE	No elderberry shrubs in area of effect
Vernal pool fairy shrimp	*Branchinecta lynchi*	T	NE	No individuals or habitat in area of effect
Vernal pool fairy shrimp - critical habitat		CH	NE	Vernal pools are not found in the project area

Database was last updated June 9, 2007.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. There are no impacts to biological resources since conditions would remain the same as exiting conditions.

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. The action area is within CTS critical habitat and therefore any ground disturbance in this area may affect CTS. The project would temporarily disturb 10,985 sq-ft of designated critical habitat. The temporarily disturbed square footage will revert back to previous conditions. The final permanent footprint of the kiosks and repaving work would be 15,000 sq feet larger than the existing facilities. The original permanent facilities have a foot print of 24,800 sq ft and the final project footprint would be 39,800 sq-ft.

Reclamation is consulting with the FWS on the proposed action. This EA will not be finalized until after consultation has been completed.

No anadromous fish or resources under jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) were identified and there would be no affect to species underneath NMFS's jurisdiction.

3.3 Recreation

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Millerton Lake is a popular lake for recreation use, primarily due to its proximity to Fresno. The outdoor recreation activities at Millerton Lake are water dependent or water enhanced. Such activities include boating, fishing, swimming, camping, hiking, hunting, and interpretive programs.

Boating

Table 3.3 – 1 Summarizes boating use on Millerton Lake for fiscal years (State) 2000 – 2001 to 2005 – 2006. Based on percent use, the most popular time for boating on Millerton Lake is May through August. This may vary somewhat depending on air temperature and lake water surface elevations.

Table 3.3
Millerton Lake Boating Use
Fiscal Years 2000-2001 to 2005-2006

Fiscal Year	**2000-2001**		**2001-2002**		**2002-2003**		**2003-2004**		**2004-2005**		**2005-2006**	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
July	5,625	18.10%	5,103	17.50%	4,690	13.00%	9,972	24.30%	6,390	24.30%	4,762	20.90%
August	4,239	13.60%	4,399	15.10%	4,491	12.40%	8,739	19.40%	5,424	20.60%	3,201	14.10%
September	2,498	8.00%	2,917	10.00%	2,408	6.70%	4,829	10.90%	0	0.00%	1,854	8.20%
October	289	0.90%	1,471	5.00%	1,140	3.20%	1,685	3.70%	1,332	5.10%	1,592	7.00%
November	347	1.10%	637	2.20%	650	1.80%	1,145	2.50%	766	2.90%	775	3.40%
December	417	1.30%	402	1.40%	495	1.40%	921	2.00%	470	1.80%	240	1.10%
January	549	1.80%	529	1.80%	800	2.20%	570	1.30%	529	2.00%	361	1.60%
February	584	1.90%	667	2.30%	587	1.60%	806	1.80%	820	3.10%	668	2.90%
March	1,267	4.10%	1,254	4.30%	1,360	3.80%	1,738	3.90%	1,598	6.10%	674	3.00%
April	2,764	8.90%	1,920	6.60%	1,400	3.90%	3,057	6.80%	2,121	8.10%	1,686	7.40%
May	7,003	22.50%	4,193	14.40%	7,599	21%	5,439	12.10%	3,171	12.10%	2,821	12.40%
June	5,513	17.70%	5,658	19.40%	10,502	29.10%	6,043	13.40%	3,651	13.90%	4,104	18.00%
Total	**31,095**		**29,150**		**36,122**		**44,944**		**26,272**		**22,738**	

Visitation

Total visitor use from fiscal years (State) 1995 – 1996 through 2005 – 2006 averaged 486,046 visitors per year. Comparing the last two complete years (July 2004 through June 2006) with the previous years, total visitor use declined from an average of approximately 514,000 to 373,000. This corresponds with the increase in fees in 2002 and 2004.

Visitor use varies due to many factors, including time of the day, day of the week, season, and holiday or vacation times. Typically fishing activities occur early in the morning or later in the afternoon. Swimming and day use activities occur during the middle part of the day, and camping involves overnight use.

Millerton Lake is most popular during the spring and summer seasons, and daytime and overnight use begins to increase as the weather warms. Daytime and overnight use is higher in the spring and summer and lower in the fall and winter. The percentage of daytime use on weekends (versus weekdays) increases in all seasons. Overnight use is much greater in spring and summer, particularly on weekends. In spring and summer an overall average occupancy rate of 40 percent is compared to the overall average of approximately 4 percent in fall and winter.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Recreational opportunities as well as the ingress and egress to MLSRA would remain the same. Frustration at the time to ingress into MLSRA may dissuade some recreationalists from visiting MLSRA, however as the population in Fresno and Madera Counties increase this should be compensated. Visitors would continue to have risks associated with the left hand turn off of Friant Road when the traffic backs up.

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Recreational opportunities would remain the same however ingress and egress into MLSRA would be smoother, faster and safer. This may lead to a more satisfying recreational experience and a slight increase in return visitation.

3.4 Cultural Resources

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Cultural Resources is a broad term that includes prehistoric, historic, architectural, and traditional cultural properties. The San Joaquin Valley is rich in historical and pre-historic cultural resources. Cultural resources in this area are generally prehistoric in nature and include remnants of native human populations that existed before European settlement. Prior to the 18th Century, many Native American tribes inhabited the Central Valley. It is possible that many cultural resources lie undiscovered across the valley. The San Joaquin Valley supported extensive populations of Native Americans, principally the Northern Valley Yokuts, in the prehistoric period. Cultural studies in the San Joaquin Valley have been limited. The conversion of land and intensive farming practices over the last century has probably destroyed many Native American cultural sites.

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. There are no impacts to cultural resources since conditions would remain the same as exiting conditions.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Reclamation consulted with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) because the Proposed Action was the type of activity that had the potential to affect historic properties, assuming they were present. A record search revealed that the area had been previously inventoried on two occasions and that there were no cultural resources located within the immediate area of potential effects. Reclamation also sent letters of inquiry to five federally recognized Indian Tribes and one non-federally recognized Indian group. Reclamation received no expression of concern from the Indian contacts. In the letter that was sent to SHPO Reclamation concluded that the Proposed Action would result in no affect to historic properties. SHPO concurred with that finding in a letter dated July 5, 2007. A copy of the letter received from the SHPO can be found in Appendix A.

3.5 Indian Trust Assets

3.5.1 Affected Environment

Indian trust assets (ITAs) are legal interests in assets that are held in trust by the U.S. Government for federally recognized Indian tribes or individual Indians. The trust relationship usually stems from a treaty, executive order, or act of Congress. The Secretary of the Interior is the trustee for the United States on behalf of federally recognized Indian tribes. “Assets” are anything owned that holds monetary value. “Legal interests” means there is a property interest for which there is a legal remedy, such a compensation or injunction, if there is improper interference. Assets can be real property, physical assets, or intangible property rights, such as a lease, or right to use something. ITAs cannot be sold, leased or otherwise alienated without United States’ approval. ITAs may include lands, minerals, and natural resources, as well as hunting, fishing, and water rights. Indian reservations, rancherias, and public domain allotments are examples of lands that are often considered trust assets. In some cases, ITAs may be located off trust land.

Reclamation shares the Indian trust responsibility with all other agencies of the Executive Branch to protect and maintain ITAs reserved by Indian tribes, or individual Indians by treaty, statute, or Executive Order.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. There would be no impacts to ITAs, since conditions would remain the same as exiting conditions.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. There are no tribes possessing legal property interests held in trust by the United States in the land involved with this action, therefore there would be no affect to ITAs.

3.3 Traffic

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Traffic is a major concern around Millerton Lake. CDPR is concerned that current use patterns, as well as the expected increased use as the population in Fresno and Madera Counties increases, are causing and will continue to cause dangerous driving situations. Traffic on Millerton Road has increased dramatically outside the park due to housing developments and Table Mountain Casino. This has increased the number of cars on the roads to and around Millerton Lake.

Millerton Road, the main route along the southwest edge of the MLSRA which leads to the kiosks, runs from Friant Road until it intersects with Auberry Road in Fresno County. It is currently a two-land road with a left turn lane at intersections. During periods of high use, the short left turn lane at the south entrance creates an excessive buildup of traffic waiting to turn left into MLSRA.

Traffic counts were taken at various area intersections on Millerton Road over the period beginning in 1991 through 2000 (Fresno County 2000). While the seasons that the data were collected were not indicated, even with the potential variations in seasons, the increase is significant. The traffic level at the south shore entrance in 1991 was 1,269 cars over a 24-hour period. In 1999, the traffic level at the same intersection was 6,999 cars over a 24 hour period, which represents an increase of 551 percent.

The total number of paying vehicles per year has decreased from 2000 to 2006. The total number of vehicles was 130,567 in fiscal year (State) 2000 – 2001 and 107,235 in fiscal year 2004 – 2005, a decrease of 17.9 percent.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. The traffic turning left from Millerton Road at the south entrance of MLSRA would continue to be problematic as traffic on Millerton Road increases and visitation to the lake increases as the area population increases.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. The traffic turning left from Millerton Road at the south entrance of MLSRA would be relieved as more vehicles hauling boats would be able to enter the MLSRA without stacking up in Millerton Road and causing traffic congestion and potential accidents. The Proposed Action would have a positive affect on traffic on Millerton Road at the entrance station. Traffic in the general area, however, would be lessened slightly as the positive impacts would be seasonal and during peaks times of ingress into the park.

3.4 Socioeconomic Resources

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Fresno and Madera Counties have lower population densities and median age than the California average. Both counties have lower income levels, higher poverty levels, and lower education levels than state averages. Population increases in Fresno and Madera Counties are expected to be much higher than the state average over the next 20 years. Both counties are projected to have higher growth rates than the state average, with Madera County predicted to grow at a rate of 86.2 percent between 2000 and 2020. (Millerton Lake Draft RMP July 2007)

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Frustration at long times to enter the park at peak times may lead to a minute decrease in tourism with an ancillary reduction in tourism revenues. Compared to overall tourism revenues this potential decrease is unquantifiable and so small as to be undetectable.

Employment opportunities would not undergo long-term or major changes.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. Reduction in frustration at long times to enter the park at peak times

may lead to a minute increase in tourism with an ancillary increases in tourism revenues. Compared to overall tourism revenues this potential increase is unquantifiable and so small as to be undetectable.

Employment opportunities would not undergo long-term or major changes.

3.5 Environmental Justice

3.5.1 Affected Environment

Executive Order 12898, dated February 11, 1994, requires Federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not disproportionately impact minority and disadvantaged populations. The market for seasonal workers on local farms draws thousands of migrant workers, commonly of Hispanic origin from Mexico and Central America. The population of some small communities typically increases during late summer harvest.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. There would be no changes in jobs or economic opportunities for disadvantaged populations. There would be no increase in fees at the park that may affect recreational opportunities for disadvantaged populations.

Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, Reclamation would approve the replacement of the kiosks and the associated repaving work. The Proposed Action would not cause dislocation, changes in employment, or increase flood, drought, or disease. There would be no increase in fees at the park that may affect recreational opportunities for disadvantaged populations. There would be no changes to existing conditions. Employment opportunities for low-income wage earners and minority population groups would be within historical conditions. The Proposed Action would not disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged or minority populations.

3.6 Cumulative Impacts

Reclamation's replacement of the kiosks and associated repaving work would not impact water quantity or quality, cultural resources, ITAs or socio-economic resources. There would be a slightly positive effect on recreation and traffic resources. Therefore the Proposed Action would not result in any cumulative impacts.

Section 4 Consultation and Coordination

4.1 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 USC 651 et seq.)

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act requires that Reclamation consult with fish and wildlife agencies (federal and state) on all water development projects that could affect biological resources. The implementation of the CVPIA, of which this action is a part, has been jointly analyzed by Reclamation and the FWS and is being jointly implemented. The amendments enacted in 1946 require consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the fish and wildlife agencies of States where the "waters of any stream or other body of water are proposed or authorized, permitted or licensed to be impounded, diverted or otherwise controlled or modified" by any agency under a Federal permit or license. Consultation is to be undertaken for the purpose of "preventing loss of and damage to wildlife resources." The Proposed Action would not cause water diversion or impoundment and therefore there would be no coordination needed under the FWCA.

4.2 Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1521 et seq.)

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires Federal agencies, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species.

The Proposed Action would cause disturbance of CTS critical habitat due to construction of the relocated entrance kiosks and the associated paving work. Reclamation is consulting with the FWS. This EA will not be finalized until consultation with the FWS has been completed.

4.3 National Historic Preservation Act (15 USC 470 et seq.)

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to evaluate the effects of federal undertakings on historical, archaeological and cultural resources. Reclamation consulted with the SHPO because the Proposed Action was the type of activity that had the potential to affect historic properties, assuming there were present. A record search revealed that the area had been previously inventories on two occasions and that there were no cultural resources located within the immediate area of potential effects. Reclamation also sent letters of inquiry to five federally recognized Indian Tribes and one non-federally recognized Indian group. Reclamation received no expression of concern from the Indian contacts. In the letter that was sent to SHPO Reclamation concluded that the Proposed Action would result in no affect

to historic properties. SHPO concurred with that finding in a letter dated July 5, 2007. A copy of the letter received from the SHPO can be found in Appendix A.

4.4 Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC Sec. 703 et seq.)

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements various treaties and conventions between the U.S. and Canada, Japan, Mexico and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Unless permitted by regulations, the Act provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture or kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer to or sell, barter, purchase, deliver or cause to be shipped, exported, imported, transported, carried or received any migratory bird, part, nest, egg or product, manufactured or not. Subject to limitations in the Act, the Secretary of the Interior may adopt regulations determining the extent to which, if at all, hunting, taking, capturing, killing, possessing, selling, purchasing, shipping, transporting or exporting of any migratory bird, part, nest or egg will be allowed, having regard for temperature zones, distribution, abundance, economic value, breeding habits and migratory flight patterns.

The Proposed Action would have no effect on birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

4.5 Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management and Executive Order 11990-Protection of Wetlands

Executive Order 11988 requires Federal agencies to prepare floodplain assessments for actions located within or affecting flood plains, and similarly, Executive Order 11990 places similar requirements for actions in wetlands. The project would not affect either concern.

Section 5 List of Preparers and Reviewers

Reclamation	
Judi Tapia, Natural Resource Specialist, SCCAO	Author
Laura Myers, Natural Resource Specialist, SCCAO	Reviewer
Melanie Yow, Biological Sciences Technician, SCCAO	Reviewer
Jack Collins, Resources Management Specialist, SCCAO	Reviewer
CDPR	
Al Orozco	Reviewer
Jess Cooper	Reviewer
Department of Boating and Waterways	
Michael Ton	Reviewer

Section 6 References

Fernandez 2002 – Site visit by Jamie Shamseldin of URS Corporation including meeting and tour of the park with Henry Fernandez of the California Department of Parks and Recreation on December 16 and 17, 2002

Fresno County 2000 – *Fresno County General Plan*. Adopted on October 3, 2000. Available at http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/4510/4360/General_Plan/general_plan.htm.

FWS 2007 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Database: http://www.fws.gov/pacific/sacramento/es/spp_lists/auto_list.cfm. The list is for the Friant Quad. The list was last updated June 9, 2007.

Griggs 2002 – Telephone conversation between Jamie Shamseldin of URS Corporation and Dan Griggs, Head of Maintenance at the Millerton Lake State Recreation Area, on November 25.

Millerton Lake Draft RMP July 2007 - *Millerton Lake Resource Management Plan/General Plan. Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report* – US Department of the Interior/Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Parks and Recreation; July 2007

State Parks 1979 – *Millerton Lake State Recreation Area General Plan.* California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, CA. Amended 1980, April 1983